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## **JUSTICE DEPARTMENT, FBI, ANNOUNCE ARRESTS TARGETING CHILD PROSTITUTION RINGS IN PENNSYLVANIA, NEW JERSEY, AND MICHIGAN**

WASHINGTON D.C. – In one of the largest coordinated enforcement actions ever taken against child prostitution rings in the United States, 19 individuals have been arrested and more than 30 charged in the latest phase of “Innocence Lost,” an ongoing national investigation into criminal enterprises involved in the recruitment of children for prostitution, the Department of Justice announced today.

Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales, Assistant Attorney General Alice S. Fisher of the Criminal Division, FBI Assistant Director Chris Swecker, Criminal Investigative Division, and National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) Vice President John Rabun announced the recent arrests a news conference in Washington today. As a result of this operation, more than 30 child victims were identified, bringing the overall total of child victims identified to more than 200 since the Innocence Lost initiative began in 2003. Items seized in this latest sweep included residential properties, vehicles, U.S. currency, electronics, jewelry, and child pornography images.

Within the past 48 hours, indictments and criminal complaints were unsealed in four U.S. Districts (the Middle District of Pennsylvania, the District of New Jersey, the Eastern District of Michigan, and the District of Hawaii) charging 31 individuals with various offenses including the transportation of minors to engage in prostitution, attempting to coerce and entice minors to engage in prostitution, sex trafficking in children, kidnapping, witness tampering, possession and distribution of child pornography, illegal firearms possession, narcotic offenses, money laundering and tax evasion. Twelve persons have been charged, but remain at large.

"Our society has no place for those who prey on children and no tolerance for child prostitution or sex trafficking," said Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales. "The Justice Department and our partners in the law enforcement community are committed to stopping this terrible practice and protecting our children. Through successful initiatives like Innocence Lost, we will continue to pursue aggressively sex traffickers, child prostitution rings, and the despicable individuals who stand behind them."

“The FBI and its partners cannot restore the innocence lost from those children who are lured into childhood prostitution,” said FBI Assistant Director Swecker. “These children are victimized twice; first by the handler who exploits them and secondly by the individual who solicits them. To combat these heinous crimes, we have channeled our resources through nationwide task forces to identify and disrupt criminal enterprises and predators engaged in the recruitment, exploitation, and transportation of juveniles for the purpose of prostitution.”

"This is a crime of hidden victims," said John Rabun, Vice President of NCMEC. “Many think child trafficking is only a problem in foreign countries, but nothing can be further from the truth. Thanks to the FBI’s leadership, more victims are being uncovered and more perpetrators arrested.”

### **HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA**

In Pennsylvania, a 33-count federal indictment was unsealed against the following 16 defendants: Franklin Robinson, Derek Maes, Terrance Williams, Derick Price, Dawan Oliver, Kenneth Britton, Shimon Maxwell, Eric Pennington, Eric Hayes, Kory Barham, Robert Scott, Sr., Robert Scott II, David Powers, Atlas Aquarius Simpson, Melissa Jacobs and Tana Adkins. The superseding indictment was returned by a federal grand jury in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania on December 8, 2005. The defendants are charged with offenses including conspiracy to violate federal law, transporting individuals, including minors, interstate for prostitution, sex trafficking of children, interstate travel in aid of racketeering, and conspiracy to engage in money laundering.

The conspiracy count naming all of the defendants charges that, from February 2001 to the present date, the defendants conspired to transport individuals interstate and entice individuals to travel interstate for the purpose of prostitution and travel in interstate commerce and use facilities in interstate commerce to promote prostitution. The overt acts listed in furtherance of the conspiracy allege that the defendants used juveniles and adults for prostitution activity in the Harrisburg, Pennsylvania area and that they coordinated this activity by setting prices for sexual services at the Gables of Harrisburg truck stop in Linglestown, Pennsylvania and wiring money to co-conspirators in other states. The conspiracy also allegedly involved extensive interstate travel and transportation of women and girls for prostitution. Those transported include a 12 year-old girl. The multiple locations around the country connected to the charged conspiracy include Washington, D.C., and Toledo, Ohio, which is the hometown of several of the defendants. The defendants also allegedly gave and sold women and girls to each other for use as prostitutes.

The indictment also alleges that the defendants used violence and intimidation to recruit and control the women and girls working for them or their co-conspirators. Among these acts of violence, defendant Franklin Robinson allegedly told defendant Derek Maes that he had fractured his hand while beating a woman working for him as a prostitute because she had not made enough money. Defendant Derek Maes allegedly broke the nose of a woman who was working for him as a prostitute and later threatened

her family. Defendants Melissa Jacobs and Tana Adkins allegedly beat a woman who was working as a “renegade,” or without a pimp, at the Gables of Harrisburg truck stop in Linglestown, Pennsylvania.

The indictment also contains forfeiture allegations concerning property connected to the money laundering and child exploitation offenses, including property used to facilitate these offenses. The indictment also seeks forfeiture of a money judgment of one million dollars and real property including several residences in Ohio and numerous vehicles.

The investigation is being conducted by the FBI, the Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigative Division (IRS-CID), the Pennsylvania State Police, the Swatara Township Police Department, the Dauphin County District Attorney’s Office, and the Steelton Police Department.

The case is being prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney’s Office of the Middle District of Pennsylvania, Assistant U.S. Attorneys Gordon Zubrod and James Clancy, and Department of Justice Criminal Division’s Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section Trial Attorney Wendy Waldron.

### **ATLANTIC CITY, NEW JERSEY**

In New Jersey, Matthew D. Thompkins, Demetrius Lemus, Noel Lopez, Melissa Ramlakhan, Emily Collins-Koslosky, Jacqueline Collins-Koslosky, Anna Argyroudou, and Kemyra Jemerson were indicted by a federal grand jury in Camden, New Jersey. The defendants are charged with conspiring to transport minors in furtherance of prostitution.

The underlying federal investigation into the prostitution enterprise allegedly led and organized by Matthew D. Thompkins began in January of 2004. The investigation allegedly revealed Thompkins has been a pimp for many years operating in cities including Atlantic City, New Jersey, the Bronx, New York, Boston, Massachusetts, Miami, Florida and Las Vegas, Nevada. It is also alleged that Thompkins has close relationships with other pimps including defendants Lemus and Lopez whom Thompkins mentors and who assist Thompkins in the operation of his prostitution enterprise. The indictment alleges that Thompkins has had both minor and adult females working for him as prostitutes. Most of Thompkins’ prostitutes assist in running the prostitution enterprise by recruiting new prostitutes, arranging and assisting travel of prostitutes including minors between major cities to engage in prostitution, and laundering the proceeds of their illegal activities.

Thompkins owns real estate either in his own name or of that of his co-conspirators including Melissa Ramlakhan, in the Bronx, New York, Yonkers, New York, and in Galloway Township, New Jersey. The indictment alleges these properties have been used to facilitate prostitution activities. Thompkins owns a variety of vehicles including a 2003 GMC Hummer H2, a 2003 Land Rover-Range Rover, a 2002 Cadillac Escalade, a 2003 Mercedes Benz SL500, a 2001 Mercedes Benz, a 2000 Mercedes Benz CL500, and

a 1999 Lexus RX300. These vehicles allegedly have also been used to facilitate prostitution activities.

The investigation is being conducted by the FBI in cooperation with the Atlantic City Police Department, the New Jersey State Police, the Pleasantville Police Department, the New Jersey Division of Gaming Enforcement, the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Labor Racketeering, the Egg Harbor Township Police Department, and the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department. Considerable assistance was also provided by the Office of Inspector General of the U.S. Postal Service.

The case is being prosecuted by Trial Attorney Sherri A. Stephan of the Department of Justice Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section and Assistant U.S. Attorney Jason Richardson of the District of New Jersey.

## **DETROIT, MICHIGAN/HONOLULU, HAWAII**

In Michigan, two prostitution rings were dismantled. In one, Robert Lewis Young, Jeffrey McCoy, and George Abro were indicted December 13, 2005 by a federal grand jury in Detroit. The defendants were charged with 27 counts of violating federal statutes including the sex trafficking of children, sex trafficking by force, fraud or coercion, transportation of a minor for criminal sexual activity, transportation for prostitution, sexual exploitation of children, interstate distribution of child pornography, threatening interstate communications, possession with the intent to distribute marijuana, felon in possession of a firearm, money laundering, and use of an interstate facility in aid of racketeering.

The federal investigation stems from Young's prostitution enterprise that spanned from Michigan to Hawaii. The investigation revealed Young allegedly recruited women and children to prostitute for him and, as a result, reaped substantial financial benefit. The indictment further alleges that Young laundered the proceeds of those illegal prostitution activities with the help of co-conspirators. Additionally, the District of Hawaii yesterday charged Young with 21 counts of violating federal statutes including the sex trafficking of children, sex trafficking by force, fraud or coercion, transportation of a minor for criminal sexual activity, transportation for prostitution, distribution of child pornography, money laundering, and use of an interstate facility in aid of racketeering.

The investigation is being conducted by the FBI, Michigan State Police, U.S. Postal Inspection Service, IRS, the Detroit Major Crimes Task Force, the Detroit Police Department, and the Macomb County Enforcement Team. In Hawaii, the investigation was led by the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force comprised of members from the State Attorney Generals Office, the FBI, Immigration Customs Enforcement (ICE), the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, and the Honolulu Police Department.

The case is being prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney's Office in the Eastern District of Michigan, Assistant U.S. Attorney John O'Brien and Department of Justice Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section Trial Attorney Kayla Bakshi. The

charges in Hawaii are being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Wes Porter of the U.S. Attorney's Office in the District of Hawaii.

In a separate Michigan case, Deric Willoughby, Brandy Shope, Jennifer Huskey, and Richard Lamar Gordon were indicted December 13, 2005 by a federal grand jury in Detroit. The defendants are charged with 5 counts each including sexual exploitation of children, transportation of children for the purpose of prostitution, sexual trafficking of children, interstate transportation of minors for prostitution, conspiracy, and aiding and abetting.

The indictment alleges that during May 2005, defendants Willoughby, Shope, Huskey, and Gordon engaged in a conspiracy to commit the offenses of sexual exploitation of children and transportation of children for the purposes of prostitution. Specifically, the defendants are alleged to have transported two minor girls from their hometown of Toledo, Ohio to Michigan for the purpose of forcing the two minors to engage in commercial sexual acts for money. The minor girls were allegedly instructed by Shope and co-defendant Huskey that they would be prostituting themselves for Willoughby and that they would have to obey him or suffer physical harm. During the ten days that the minors were being held by Willoughby, Shope and Huskey, each minor was physically assaulted by Willoughby in addition to being forced to engage in several different commercial sexual acts as defendants Shope and Huskey watched, participated, and collected money from patrons. At one point during the conspiracy, defendants Willoughby, Shope and Huskey allegedly transported the two minor girls to a Sears parking lot in Toledo, Ohio where they met co-defendant Gordon. Gordon, a truck driver, transported the women to a truck stop in Michigan where he allegedly paid to have sex with one of the minors, while the other minor, accompanied by defendant Shope, was forced to engage in commercial sexual acts with other truck drivers at the truck stop.

The FBI and Washtenaw County Sheriff's Department are conducting the investigation and the case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Saima Mohsin of the U.S. Attorney's Office in the Eastern District of Michigan, with the assistance of Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section Trial Attorney Kayla Bakshi.

All of the charges announced today are merely accusations, and all defendants are presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty in a court of law.

### **INNOCENCE LOST INITIATIVE**

In the spring of 2003, the Violent Crimes and Major Offenders Section (VCMOS) of FBI headquarters, in partnership with the Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section (CEOS) of the Department of Justice and the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC), initiated "Innocence Lost," designed to address the growing problem of children forced into prostitution. The program brings state and federal law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, and social service providers all from one city to NCMEC, where the group is trained together. In addition, CEOS has reinforced the

training by assigning prosecutors to help bring cases in those cities plagued by child prostitution. To date, the Innocence Lost Initiative has resulted in 139 open investigations (67 in 2004 and 72 in 2005), 505 arrests (118 in 2004 and 387 in 2005), 60 complaints (11 in 2004 and 49 in 2005), 70 indictments (26 in 2004 and 44 in 2005), and 67 convictions (22 in 2004 and 45 in 2005).

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